



Arkansas Department of Education

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Transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education

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Arkansas Leadership Academy Names New Master Principals

LITTLE ROCK — Lisa Miller, Sharla Osbourn and Ashley Williams, having achieved the status of Master School Principal, were recognized today at the State Board of Education meeting.

Miller, Osbourn and Williams completed three years of rigorous professional development plus an additional year of performance evaluations to achieve the designation this spring from the Arkansas Leadership Academy's Master Principal Program.

Miller, a principal at Van Buren Freshman Academy in the Van Buren School District, holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas and a master's degree from Arkansas Tech University at Russellville. Miller expects to complete course work for an Educational Specialist degree from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro next month. She currently serves as an at-large board member for the Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Miller has volunteered her leadership and service by serving on the advisory board for Education Renewal Zones and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics programs at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. She is frequently invited to share strategies and processes for implementing a Response to Intervention system in secondary schools across Arkansas. Van Buren Freshman Academy has been recognized by schools across Arkansas for its implementation of an effective RTI system in a secondary school.

Osborn, a principal at Janie Darr Elementary School in the Rogers School District, received a bachelor's degree from College of the Ozarks and a master's from the University of Arkansas. Her elementary school received recognition from ADE as one of the top 5 percent of schools for high student performance on the state required assessments in grades three through 10, as well as one of the top 10 percent of schools that achieved high student academic growth based on data from the 2016-2017 school year. Through Osborn's leadership, the school focuses on developing strong reciprocal partnerships with the community, emphasizing high expectations for student achievement and community engagement.

Williams is a principal at Mary Mae Jones Elementary School in the Bentonville School District. She received a bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas and a master's degree from Harding University in Searcy. Williams has volunteered her leadership and service to educators and students, as well as in her community. Schools from across the state visit Mary Mae Jones to gain insight and inspiration when implementing the Leader in Me program and a skills-based RTI system.

The Arkansas Leadership Academy is based in the College of Education and Health Professions at the University of Arkansas. The academy's Master Principal Program was authorized by Act 44 of the Second Extraordinary Session of the 2003 Arkansas General Assembly.

"Developing principals with the talent to lead complex organizations requires giving them a broad range of leadership experiences along the way," ALA Director David Cook said. "This rigorous four-year program enables school leaders to enhance and accelerate student and adult learning. I commend these principals for being dedicated to their students, teachers and learning communities. I also want to thank the Arkansas Legislature, the Arkansas Department of Education and the academy's partners for their support and vision in building the leadership capacity of principals across our great state."

Phase I of the Master Principal Program is open to all school principals who have at least one year of experience and the support and permission of their superintendents to participate. Principals from across the state meet during the year in four multi-day sessions for intense study while applying the learning from those sessions in their schools throughout the year.

Admission to the second phase of the program requires submission of a portfolio documenting the application of the lessons learned from the first phase and the results of that work to improve student and adult learning in the school. To be admitted to the third phase, principals must complete a rigorous application process that includes evidence of their impact on education at the district, state and regional levels. These portfolios are evaluated by stakeholders in education from Arkansas, as well as from out of state. Scorers receive training through the Arkansas Leadership Academy.

After successful completion of all three phases, principals may choose to participate in a rigorous assessment by a team of trained examiners with at least one member on each team from another state. The rigorous assessment process examines evidence from three primary sources:

- Student Performance: An analysis of student academic achievement data
- Principal Performance: An analysis of a portfolio created by the principal
- School Performance: A site visit to gather evidence

Successful performance in these three areas qualifies an individual for Master School Principal status. Master Principals receive a \$9,000 per year bonus for five years upon earning the designation. They are eligible for an additional \$25,000 per year for five years if they are selected to serve at a low-performing school.

Established in 1991, the Arkansas Leadership Academy is a nationally-recognized statewide partnership of 15 universities; nine professional associations; 15 education service cooperatives; the Arkansas Departments of Education, Higher Education, and Career Education; the Arkansas Educational Television Network; the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce, Tyson Foods Inc; Walmart Stores, Inc.; superintendent representatives; the Office of the Governor; and the State Board of Education, a total of 51 partners.

For more information, visit <http://www.arkansasleadershipacademy.org> or contact Brenda Tash at the Arkansas Leadership Academy at bgtash@uark.edu or 479-575-3030.

(Picture 1: Lisa Miller; Picture 2: Sharla Osbourn; Picture 3: Ashley Williams)

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